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Harrison, (Anna Laura Robertson)
Mrs. John Darley, 1876-1964.

Memoirs of life in
Edmonton, 1883-1964.

This is a little story for my great grandchildren to tell them how their great grandmother came to Edmonton in the year 1883, when she was a little girl seven years old.

My father, Walter Scott Robertson, had gone to Winnipeg a few years earlier and from there had driven to Edmonton by team and wagon, though many at that time had made the long journey with ox and cart. He returned to Seaforth and immediately had a return of his old affliction, bronchial asthma. As he had been quite free from this while in the West, he decided at once to return to Edmonton, which he did, my mother and family to follow as soon as a home could be made ready.

What it must have meant to my mother, I only realized much later, leaving friends as well as all the comforts which the early pioneers had to give up, but I can't remember ever hearing her complain.

There were six children: Harry 17, Nel 15, Carrie 13, Fred 10, and I (registered Anna Laura but christened Annie Laurie) 7, and my small brother Bobby, 2.

To us, or at least to me, it was wonderful riding on the train for days, eating and even sleeping on the train. What more could a small girl want? Eventually we reached Winnipeg where we were met by a distant cousin of my father's, Alex Macdonald, who took us to his lovely home but told mother he had bad news for her. The telegraph lines were down between Edmonton and Winnipeg and it was impossible to get a message through. Of course, I didn't realize at the time what this meant to my mother. Uncle Alex, as we called him, advised her to return to Seaforth as it was then late in September. I have many times since heard my mother say the happiest day of her life was when she received the telegram saying my father would meet her in Calgary on a certain date.

As the C.P.R. was just being built through to the Coast, we travelled the last part of the journey to Calgary in a construction car. Our arrival in Calgary, the end of the line at that time, I do remember, as my father was there to meet us with a beautiful team and two-seated affair, called a Democrat, also a light wagon, two-seated, driven by a young man who later became a distinguished army officer.

As that was in 1883, there was very little, if any, Calgary at that time, so we were driven to the banks of

the Bow River, where tents were ready for us. I can still remember the thrill as I saw inside a tent and there stood the dearest little camp stove, which I actually thought was a toy. As the evening was a bit chilly, Louis Daniels, the driver of the third wagon which carried tents and supplies, built a fire in the toy, which added to the wonder of it all! Then the beds on the ground with a buffalo robe for a mattress, breakfast cooked on a camp fire. It was all so exciting, at least to a seven year old. Then five wonderful days on the trail, where we forded rivers and camped at nights. Very often we would hear the most weird noises in the distance, which my father would explain was someone's 'outfit', which meant ox-carts and oxen used for freighting. The squeak of the wheels could be heard for miles.

We reached Edmonton, population then between two and three hundred, October the third, 1883. Here there was a ferry to take us over the Saskatchewan River (though have forded it many times since), but our camping days were not over as the house, which was to have been ready, was without doors and floors. A big marquee was put up and a floor laid. In this we lived until the house was ready. Again it was the mother who did the pioneering. The next excitement was the arrival of our furniture. The day the piano arrived ice was running in the river, the ferry

had been taken out, so the first piano that crossed the Saskatchewan River was forced to ford it, anxiously watched by the inhabitants of the town from the river bank. Though dangerously near upsetting many times, it finally reached the north side. By this time the house was finished and the piano was promptly unloaded and taken out of its case. My brother Harry, who played very well, immediately sat down and played it to the delight of the freighters and others who had gathered about.

An amusing thing happened while the piano was being unloaded. A long wooden box about 7' x 1' x 1' had been packed in the wagon with the piano. This the freighter carelessly threw out. His half-breed helper yelled at him, "Be careful, don't you know that is the bow to the big fiddle?" It really was a set of bed springs as packed for shipping.

As the house was much too small for the size of the family, beds would have to be made on the floor for the boys. These would consist of a feather bed rolled in a canvas and rolled downstairs every night. My brother Fred and I would mount these at the top of the stairs, not always staying on the top by the time we reached the bottom, but it was fun, at least for us.

Very soon a half-breed woman came and measured the family for moccasins, and what beautiful things they were! Some beaded and some beautifully embroidered in silk work on white doe skin, trimmed with ermine.

In the spring we moved to a larger house. It had been built for an hotel. There we stayed for the summer and fall and there my dear little sister, Grace, was born. Having a baby sister meant a great deal to me as I had practically no playmates my own age. Though there were others my age in Edmonton, we lived so far apart at that time that visiting after school was out of the question. Some would go to the south side of the river, others to Rat Creek, north of the town, then a number lived in the extreme east end along the river bank, known as Lower Settlement.

In the fall we moved into a lovely log house on the river bank, where the MacDonald Hotel now stands. There we had the room we so badly needed as my grandmother also had come to join us, my father going to Calgary to meet her with a covered wagon. (Later my father's aunt came and opened a private school). Here we lived at the time of the Riel Rebellion (1885). At that time there was no Jasper Avenue west of 99th Street. From there the road followed along the

river bank, one going down the hill, which is now called MacDougall Hill, but then known as MacCauley Hill, a family by that name living at the top; the other following the river bank past the old MacDougall Church and on to First School, now McKay Avenue School, then on to the Hudson's Bay Fort (where the Parliament Buildings now stand), and down the hill to Walters Ferry. Another trading post, Norris and Careys, was a little to the north of the Hudson's Bay on what is now 111th Street.

During the Rebellion of '85, most of the inhabitants of the town crowded into the Fort or went to St. Albert. Three families, the Olivers, Camerons and ourselves, the Robertsons, remained in the town. The Olivers lived next door to us and the Camerons moved in with us. The volunteers at the Fort kept in touch with us. When word came that the Indians from the nearby reserve were going to join the others, volunteers came up to cut the trees, which grew to the side of the road in front of our house, as protection against a surprise attack.

Before I come to the story of the Rebellion, I want to tell you what a fine people the Indians were in those early days. When we came to Edmonton no one ever thought of locking their doors, and no Indian would think of coming into one's house till told to do so. They would not even

knock on the door, but wait till someone noticed them and asked them in. But as the excitement grew they became bolder, and one day my sister Carrie, who was then 15, went into the living room to find an Indian by the name of Grasshopper sitting on the floor and looking up at a portrait of our grandfather, whom he thought was my father, and asked in Cree: "Wa - he - ow", meaning 'away', to which my sister replied: "Yes, but you get out of here." He only grunted, so she ran upstairs to get a revolver, having been shown how to use one, but mother hurried my brother Fred and me in to call Mr. Oliver, who lived next door. He came and with a few well chosen words and a little assistance, promptly ushered him out. This old Grasshopper was a well known character about the town and later on when the Indian chiefs announced the white women they were going to take, he chose my eldest sister, Nell. The Rebellion never did reach Edmonton, but we had many alarms, some startling and others amusing. I remember one evening when we were having dinner a weird noise was heard. The men about the table jumped up and ran out expecting to see the Indians at our door but it was only a flock of wild geese going north. Being nine years old I thought it very funny. For the older members of the family they were anxious times, waiting and watching for

the soldiers that were being sent from the east. They arrived after a very hard trip, many of them later going down the river to Fort Pitt, where they were having trouble. My brother Harry also went to Fort Pitt, though only 19. The Rebellion was soon put down, Louis Riel surrendered and was hanged, which a great many people still think extreme as his rising had been in protest against the white man building the railroad through the country that had been the hunting ground of the Indian and half-breed for generations, thus robbing them of their means of livelihood.

To go back to my childhood in the big house on the hill, I have many happy recollections. We all had horses to ride, Indian ponies, but we did not ride astride as the girls do now. We rode on a side saddle and loved it! However, we walked to school along the top of the hill to the school I mentioned. It consisted of one room, heated by a Hudson's Bay stove. A pail of water stood near the door with a dipper hanging above and I can't remember any epidemic being caused by us all drinking from the same dipper. I have never forgotten one tragic day in the school room. It was Bobby Burns Day and our good Scotch teacher thought we should celebrate it, so he asked if anyone knew 'Bonnie Charlie'? Most of the pupils stuck up their hand

so I did too. "All right, Annie, you sing it." I managed the first four lines, then how I wished the floor would open up and take me in. I can still see those broad boards with their wide cracks but they refused to open up. Then the teacher came to the rescue and suggested they all join in the chorus. It saved the day and also taught me a lesson.

The children came to this school from all directions, and the only contact we had with each other would be in school. Consequently, I spent most of my young days with older people and as my parents made their home open house to the many young men away from home and as we had the only piano in the town, and my brother and sister played, many evenings were spent singing songs and dancing. I can't remember when I learned to dance. There was always a shortage of girls so I would be treated quite like a grown-up and asked to dance. Of course I loved it! I still can feel the bitter disappointment I had one night. It was a special event. Others were coming and my dress and slippers were put out and I was told I could come down as soon as Bobby and Grace had gone to sleep. I laid down and want to sleep and didn't wake till the party was over, my dress and slippers there to remind me of what I had missed!

It was at about this time that I had an experience that not many little girls had even in those days. I was 'sliding' on MacCauley Hill with the MacCauley children when a young man who lived a few miles down the river drove up with two moose hitched tandem to a 'carry-all', the kind that generally was drawn by sleigh dogs. Imagine my delight when he asked me if I would like to ride up the hill. I would and I did! The moose had been caught when young, and trained. The 'carry-all' was like a toboggan with a shoe-shaped canvas or hide covering, very comfortable once you crawled into it. The driver stood up at the back.

Now I must tell you about a very good friend I had who always called me 'Little Annie'. He was the first Presbyterian minister to come to Edmonton and was one of the many young men who enjoyed the hospitality of our home. Later he was the well-known Dr. A. B. Baird, Head of Manitoba College. Just before he died, when he was in his eighties and I in my sixties, I had a letter from him beginning "Dear Little Annie". But to go back to the early days when he preached at outlying settlements such as Sturgeon River, Clover Bar or Poplar Lake, he would very often take me along for the drive. We always had a wonderful meal prepared for the 'preacher', but which I also enjoyed. I had some very happy visits with the

Baird family in later years in Winnipeg. He had a charming wife and family.

Now I must go back to the days on the hill again. A sleigh load of young people were going to Long Lake, a small lake between Edmonton and St. Albert that had just frozen over. I was allowed to go along, also a very small boy, the son of the bank manager and his wife, who were in the party. I could skate as I was then nine but the small boy had a sleigh taken along and was hauled around on that. My sister Nell, who was a very good skater, was skating backwards with Mrs. Grey, the little boy's mother. They went through the ice, my sister going full length. Fortunately, it was only about four feet deep. The husband became very much excited and ran for the hand sleigh calling, "Keep cool Emma, keep cool!", much to the amusement of at least one of the party! They were wrapped in buffalo robes and we all went home but with no ill effects.

The man who gave me the ride with the moose took the mail to St. Albert every Saturday. He always drove beautiful horses and very often asked mother if I might go for the drive. There was always a bag of candy along, very often frozen stiff before we had gone far. We always stopped on the way back at a

half-way house, owned by a Mr. Norris. Here there were a number of children who always made us welcome and didn't scorn the frozen candy. Many years later nothing was left to mark the spot but the remains of a fireplace, a sad reminder of those happy days.

Though I had a very unusual childhood, I had a very happy one. We had horses to ride, that is Indian ponies, which we kept in a corral next to the house on the hill. It is hard to believe, looking at the beautiful MacDonald Hotel, that at one time a haystack decked the river bank, rabbits frolicking about. My brother Fred and I have many times snared rabbits on what is now Jasper Avenue. I must admit I only went along and was no trapper.

About this time we had an Indian woman, Mary Bobsleigh, who worked for us quite often. It was said that she had been quite active in the wars with the Blackfoot tribe, and even been known to kill the small children. We treated her with respect but I don't think we were really afraid of her.

Of course, during those years Edmonton was not standing still as the Edmonton Bulletin would inform one. This paper was started in 1880 by the Mr. Oliver I referred to, and

though only 5½" x 7½", contained more news than many of the fifty pages of today. Many newcomers arrived, streets opened up and even sidewalks appeared, but our streets were not paved, still had the odd mud holes in their centre.

One caused me an embarrassing experience. I was riding my little mare down the street, which ran between two hotels, Alberta and Queens. In front of each sat a number of men. When we came to the mud hole my pony suddenly jumped sideways to the other side. Of course, I kept on going and landed on one foot in the mud. I will say she had the decency to wait for me and a nice man, Kenny McLeod, came to the rescue and said: "You couldn't do that again, Annie, if you tried!" This Kenny McLeod was the one who later built the McLeod Block, one of Edmonton's up-to-date business blocks. Later he brought his mother and sisters to Edmonton and one sister became my bridesmaid, later married Colonel Jamieson, and I was her matron of honor. We are now in our eighties and still friends.

But to go back to those early days. They seem to have passed so quickly. People were all so hospitable. I can remember visiting in the country where they had scarcely room for their own but always made room for one more.

Then I had many happy visits to Fort Saskatchewan. Major and Mrs. Griesbach had two daughters, one my age, and a son (who later distinguished himself in the first World War and was made Major General Griesbach). Their children too, were allowed to go to grown-up parties, which were gay affairs with men in uniform. Of course, by this time I was ten or twelve years of age, though these visits continued till I was quite grown up. Edmonton too, was growing up. Another room was added to the one-room school and I had advanced to the new part when one day the teacher of the lower grades was ill. My teacher, the same one who had allowed me to attempt to sing the Scotch song, appointed me to take over for the day. I was then about thirteen. As the pupils all knew me by my first name, I soon gave up the idea of being a teacher and games were the order of the day. As the town grew the school grew and in time your Grandad (Linda and Susan) went to the same school, and I think a record was established when your mother also attended there when she was a little girl, making three generations. The school was named after a Dr. McKay, a clever Scotch doctor, who came to Canada, married and lived in the north for many years, then came to Edmonton, where many of his children and

grandchildren still live. I had tea with one of the daughters recently and she told me about an experience her mother had while in the north. Dr. McKay was on one of his trips. A man was brought in who had been mauled by a bear. His abdomen had been torn open as well as other injuries. Mrs. McKay operated on him. He made a perfect recovery and her husband told her he could not have done better. That was what pioneer women did. Her only training had been what she had learned assisting her doctor husband.

Now I must come back to Edmonton. We still lived in the log house on the hill when a Captain Casey of the Northwest Mounted Police was moved to Edmonton in 1887, and had quarters at the Hudson's Bay Fort. They had three daughters, Grace, Clare and Nora, the two older about my age, so I would quite often be taken down to the Fort to spend the day. We would play on the river bank in front of the Fort, often joined by members of the Hudson's Bay stores. I have a plush sewing box that I won from one of them, in which I keep my special letters, after having it seventy odd years. I won it on a philippina, a game we used to play when we found an almond with two nuts in it. We would share it with someone, then try to catch them into saying "yes" or "no", or sometimes "give" and "take". You see,

my dears, we had to make our own fun, no T.V. or moving pictures. While I am telling you about these days, I must mention a half-breed dwarf that worked about the Fort, known as Muschias, a very powerful man and a wonderful swimmer though not much more than four feet tall, if that. After many years, I saw Muschias in a store and spoke to him, and asked him if he remembered me, that I was one of the little girls that played at the Fort so long ago. His remark was not flattering. He just said: "All the same, like mosquitoes!"

Now to go back to those early days. For those pioneers who had vision they were having their dreams materialize. Settlers arrived in numbers, many coming overland from Calgary as we had done. However, in 1891, the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, known as the C. and E., was built through to the south side of the river. As there was no bridge over the Saskatchewan at that time, the train was met by busses from the north side and the passengers brought to Edmonton in style, usually with a four-horse team. In 1902, a bridge was built at what was known as the lower ferry and the same year the Edmonton Yukon and Pacific Line joined with the C. & E. and brought the traffic to Edmonton. In the meantime, the south side became known as Strathcona. The rivalry was very keen

between the two towns, especially where sports were concerned. You must remember we were just towns, no big stadium from which to watch a game, more often standing by a fence surrounding the players. On one occasion I was standing watching as our Edmonton players came on the ice. They were wearing new sweaters, each displaying a big 'E'. A Strathcona girl standing near me said: "Yes, 'E' for idiot!"

The girls played hockey too. I was captain of the team when in my teens. We played against Strathcona too. Looking at the photograph now, I realize that I am the only one of the team left. We girls also curled but skating and dancing were our chief amusements in the winter.

By 1893 Edmonton had grown to the extent that a number of theatrical troups were coming to town and in that year my father built what was known as Robertson Hall. Companies would come and play different plays each night for a week or more at a time, famous musicians and well known actors among them. The Hall had a beautiful floor so was also used as a ballroom. As I was then in my teens I was generally one of the party, always went with a brother but didn't always go home with him. We always had programmes and as there were many more men than girls

there, one's dances would generally be engaged ahead of time. But in any case there would be a line-up waiting as we came out of the dressing-room so one would have extras and extra extras three or four deep. I remember my first evening gown. It was a mauve silk with deep chiffon frill falling off the shoulders and outlined with violets at the top - my first long dress. Pages could be filled about the gay times we spent in Robertson Hall, such times as when the Old Timers held their ball and decorated the walls with valuable furs and had teepees on the stage; and other occasions when a freighter, who played wonderful dance music on a whistle, would come to town and an impromptu dance would be organized, my brother Harry often playing the piano. Then, of course, some of the old timers played the 'fiddle'. We never called it a violin but grand dance music. The Hall was burned down in 1906, and though I was then married and mother of your Grandad, I was at the dance the night of the fire. We were having coffee when a fireman came up to tell us that a building at the back of the hall was on fire and we had better go out for a little while. We jokingly marked our cups of coffee and went to the street to watch the fire department, but the water tank was empty and the fire swept through the building and nothing could

save it, so what started as a gay party ended in a sad group saying goodnight and going home.

Now I must again turn back the clock and tell you about our camping days at Cooking Lake. It was said that it had been called that as the Indians made it their stopping place between Beaver Lake and Edmonton. Though only about twenty miles south-east of Edmonton, when we first had a camp there it would take a long day to make the trip. No regular road, just trails, and as the farmers moved into the country it would often mean finding a new way through each trip. At first we camped in tents, two or three families making up a party, all joining around a huge campfire in the evening and singing the latest popular song or reciting a funny verse. One I can remember as one of the party couldn't see why we laughed:

Go ask Papa, the maiden said,
Now the young man knew Papa was dead,
Also the wicked life he'd lead,
So he understood when the maiden said
'Go ask Papa'.

After a year or two my father had a house built of spruce logs and called it 'Spruce Lodge'. It still stands and is used by his granddaughter (his daughter Carrie's daughter).

Many jolly times were spent in it. No orchestra to dance to but generally someone would appear that could play the fiddle and someone would call off the square dances. My brother Bob became quite clever at it. Cooking Lake soon became very popular as a summer resort. Everyone knew how to paddle a canoe and sail a boat. Much later, after I had married your great grandfather, we built a cottage on the point. It too was spruce logs, with a huge fireplace of stone. From the verandah we could watch the sailing races as they had regular regattas during the summer. Now many people live there and come to the city in a matter of minutes. Your Granddaddy (Linda and Susan) spent his summers at Cooking Lake from the time he was a year old, so he knew how to sail a boat and paddle a canoe when quite young. He was also a very good swimmer. When twelve years old he swam across the bay to the point, which was a good test for a grown-up. I may add, his father followed in a canoe.

This great grandfather of yours came to Edmonton in 1892 from New Brunswick. He graduated in medicine at McGill University, Dr. John Darley Harrison. I met him at Fort Saskatchewan where I was visiting my eldest sister Nell, who married and lived there. I was then sixteen.

He became our Family Doctor, as well as a friend of the family (my father had also come from New Brunswick). In 1894 (or 1895) he went back to New Brunswick and brought his bride, Jennie T. Logan, to Edmonton. In 1896 their son, Jack, was born and was only two years old when his mother died. He was taken with his baby sister to their grandmother in Fredericton. The baby sister died the following Fall and Jack remained in the East until he was thirteen, when he came to visit us. I had married his father on December 20th, 1899, and lived in a house on the north side of Jasper between 103rd and 104th streets. It was surrounded with trees and the only house in that block (now occupied by buildings - Birks, Holt Renfrew's and such). It was in this house your granddaddy spent his baby days. He was born July 30th, 1902. When he was about six months old Dr. Baird was our guest when he came to Edmonton to dedicate a Presbyterian Church that had been built on the corner of 103rd Street and Jasper Avenue. When he left, having been with us a week or more, he remarked he had never heard 'Bobbie' cry! They were happy days for us all.

When Bobbie was a year old his father and grandfather Harrison went abroad to the Dublin University Centennial.

As Bobbie was too young to take and too precious to leave, he and I spent the summer with my parents, who had built a nice home between 105th and 106th streets, - like ours, surrounded by trees as it was the only one in the block (now replaced by Royal Bank, large cafe, etc.). As the family always spent their summer at Cooking Lake, I decided to join them, but one night convinced me it was no place for a year old. In the morning I could not decide whether Bobbie had measles or chickenpox, the mosquitoes had discovered how sweet he was, so we came back and enjoyed the comforts of home. After his Daddy's return we eventually moved to 104th Street where we lived till Bobbie had his first day in school (McKay Ave.). On his return home he announced he had had a fight. The cause: he had worn a beaded buckskin coat - of which he was very proud - and a boy had called him "squaw boy". He continued wearing the coat!

By 1910 the City as well as the school had grown extensively. A number of our friends had built nice homes on 106th Street. My father, fortunately, owned the last vacant lot in the block so he gave it to us and we built the house I lived in till I came to St. Joseph's Hospital in 1961, where I am appreciating the care and kindness

given me. It is impossible to describe the changes that have taken place in those fifty-one years: from the horse and buggy days to motor cars to aeroplanes to jet planes. I seldom motor to the country now without discovering a new subdivision complete with schools, swimming pools, etc. The population has grown from between two and three hundred in 1883, when we came to Edmonton, to 295,000 at last census!

Again I must turn back to the 'gay nineties'. The story of Edmonton would not be complete without mentioning the excitement caused here in 1897 when gold was discovered in the Klondike. The big Klondike Gold Rush was on, many coming from all parts of the world making Edmonton their starting point, some going overland and others going by the water route. My brother, Fred, was one of the first party to leave by water. Leaving Edmonton on August 10th, they reached the mouth of the Peel River by freeze-up. There they camped for the winter. Here Fred engaged two Indians with a dog team to take him to Herschel Island where there was a Hudson's Bay port. He returned to the mouth of the Peel River and in the Spring the party worked their way up the river - partly in canoes but often having to portage when going was bad. Before reaching Dawson their boat

capsized, my brother was stranded on a rock in a canyon for two nights and a day, then his companions, who had made shore, rescued him, but they lost everything but arrived in Dawson safely, the first to reach there by this route. I was in Winnipeg when the news came. When I came down to breakfast my host (Uncle Alex) told me Fred had arrived safely at Dawson then gave me the paper to read, which gave a graphic account of their adventure. Others were not so successful as many had to turn back - others that went by trail lost their horses and complete outfits. I still treature a Klondike nugget brooch he sent me.

As I have already said, I was married in 1899, also mentioned tnere were no paved roads, just trails, but delightful winding trails, and as we were both lovers of the out of doors we spent a great deal of time driving or riding in the country. One of our favourite drives was to Athabasca Landing about a hundred miles North of Edmonton, where my sister Carrie lived, her husband, Arthur Griffin, being with the Hudson's Bay Company there. We would stop overnight at Eggies' Halfway House. This was in the centre of a beautiful forest of spruce trees which was a sight to remember as we left in the early morning, when all was quiet,

and drove down the winding trail, the ground covered with low-bush cranberry foliage growing to the roadside. Later when I went by stage with my younger sister, Grace, the beautiful trees had been cut down leaving their stumps by the roadside. On the return trip we had an exciting experience. The stage was a three seated affair, the driver and a passenger on the front seat, my sister, a young Irishman, Tom O'Kelly, and myself in the second seat, and two young men in the back seat. The driver had allowed the horses (four-in-hand) to set their own pace, one of the leaders fell (I maintained it went to sleep) and the driver dropped the reins and jumped out. He had scarcely touched the ground till they were off at full speed, the reins flying. Then our brave Irish friend climbed over the front seat, actually walked up the pole of the wagon, caught the rein attached to one of the leaders forcing it to turn at an angle, and finally they were got under control. One of the passengers jumped and was badly injured. We walked the rest of the way to the Halfway House, arriving very late, where they cooked a dinner for us which we ate in the kitchen. My sister and I then wended our way between beds on the floors of the dining room, sitting room and bedroom, to a tiny bedroom that had been reserved for us. This, I may add, to the groans, grunts, 'damns' and even stronger expressions of disapproval from the weary sleepers - one could scarcely blame them.

I have told you of our precious son Robert's arrival in 1902 and attending McKay Ave. School. In 1916 he went to Port Hope Trinity College for two years, later going to Victoria High School and Alberta University where he graduated in Law. He married Phyllis Hunter in 1935 and their little daughter Gail, your mother, Linda and Susan, was born the following year - a great joy to us all as they came and spent weekends with us, Gail's grandfather being very ill, spending the last four years of his life in bed. His last Christmas with us we put the Christmas Tree in the bedroom. "Bright lights" Gail would say when she wanted the coloured lights on. On Christmas morning when her gifts were given to her, she would run with each to her Grandfather's bed and show it to him, to his delight. He said afterwards it was the happiest Christmas he ever had! He died the following April 1938.

When Gail was between two and three years of age she was 'helping' me make a bed, was smoothing down the cover with her beautiful little hands when I said: "It is good of you to help me, Gail", she smiled and said: "Do I spoil you Nanna?", a remark she had heard so often but reversed.

When the Second World War came your Granddaddy left at once with the Air Force, your Grandmother and Gail following. He was stationed at Halifax where your mother had her first schooling, attending a Convent - later were in Ottawa. In 1945 he went overseas, later returning to Ottawa, then a Wing Commander, and after the war returning to Edmonton where he practised law till moving to Calgary in 19

Since beginning my story for my great grandchildren Linda and Susan, I have been blessed with three more great grandchildren, Robert Thomas Ritchie, son of David and Gail Ritchie and brother of Linda and Susan, also Ian and Donald Harrison, sons of John and Betty Harrison and grandsons of Jack and Mary Harrison of Ottawa. And now, Ian and Donald, I have already said your Grandfather lived in Fredericton with his Grandmother but came to Edmonton in 1910 for the summer. We spent most of it at Cooking Lake where he enjoyed sailing a canoe most of the time. Later he came and attended University till the First World War. He joined in 1915. Later

he received the D.C.M. The surgeon with whom he worked also won distinction. After the war he eventually went back to New Brunswick to take a course in Forestry as it was not taught at the University of Alberta. There he met and married your grandmother, Mary Smithers, October 1st, 1925. They came to Edmonton and spent a week with us, then went to live in Winnipeg.

In 1926 your grandmother came to Edmonton and your Uncle Allan was born here on July 20th. Your Daddy (John) and your Aunt Mary were born in Winnipeg, August 20th, 1928 and December 13th, 1929. The family spent the summer of 1932 with us at Cooking Lake - for your great grandfather and me a very happy summer. In 1935 your family moved to Ottawa, your grandfather in the Forestry Department from which he retired in 1962 as Deputy Minister of Forestry.

I must not leave the early 1900 without telling about a delightful trip to Jasper in 1911 when the Grand Trunk Railway was being built to the Coast. We, your great grandfather and I, joined some very good friends Mr. and Mrs. Bob Jennings. Mr. Jennings was Editor of the Edmonton Journal. At Jasper we joined Mr. and Mrs. Caldren, he being the architect for the first Jasper Lodge.

Col. Rogers was then in charge of the Park. He procured horses for us to ride and we had a most delightful day, leaving in the early morning and riding on a 'blazed trail' to Pyramid Lake. There a young man who was fishing presented us with some trout that came fresh from the lake, was prepared and fried! Unless one has tasted fish under these circumstances it cannot be described or imagined!

On April 16th, 1964, at eighty-eight years of age, great grandmother

Anna Laura Robertson Harrison

died in Edmonton, Alberta, leaving her happy memories and family history in this

'Little Story'

for her very dear great grandchildren.